Palestine Strives to Make a State Out of an Unclaimed Waste

Acid Test of Hopes of Jews Confronts Them in New Zion

Gift, Hardly Wrung, Is Even More Difficult to Hold; Consists of Strips Along the Desert, Exposed to Maraudings of Tribes

SOME of the great romantic national causes are passing out—Ireland is in the way of becoming a free state and the Jews now have their Palestine. No one is sorry to see these old wrongs go—and the Versailles Treaty has assured us a new crop anyway—but a world without these two great instigations will conspicuously lack the rhetorical brilliance of the old.

What the Irish will do with their free state remains to be seen. What the Jews have done toward founding their new Zion is being told by Nahum Sokolow, chairman of the executive committee of the World Zionist Association, which administers Jewish Palestine under the British protectorate, who is here as spokesman for the modern Jewish state. Dr. Sokolow is editor of the leading Hebrew daily in the world, "Hacesirah," published in Warsaw. He aided in drawing up the Balfour declaration by which, after twenty-five hundred years of expatriation, a third interest in Palestine was ceded back to the Jews.

Palestine Now Is A Tri-Partite State

Palestine now is a tripartite state, governed equally by the British, Arabs and Jews. English, Arabian and Hebrew are the official languages spoken and written in public proclamations, and the official calendar, carefully managed not to collide with any of the religious observances of Christian, Moslem or Jew, proceeds at the spasmodic pace of a subway local.

Jerusalem consists of the ancient walled city and an outlying surburb of brick and stucco villas. The old city, builded deep on the ruins of its former magnificence, running through narrow, crooked, swarming streets, is quatered off in a traditional division of the city made by the Turks a hundred or more years ago in recognition of the claim of Jews, Gentiles and Moslem to look upon Jerusalem as their spiritual capital. Outside the walled city there is no official quartering.

To understand the conditions which the Jew faces in his new Zion it is necessary to know that when the British declaration gave Palestine back to the Jews it had no land to give them. It was chiefly a gift of its good will, an inexpensive offer of official recognition to the Jewish element in the population and of the right of Jews to immigrate there up to the capacity of the land to support them. Whatever land the Jews may desire they must acquire by purchase from the present Arab landholders when that is available.

This gift, so hardly wrung, appears to be even more difficult to hold Naturally only the less desirable portions of the land are available by this method—strips along the desert, exposed to the maraudings of desert tribes; low lying tracts from which the peasant has been driven off by malaria, occasional estates sacrificed by bankrupt effendis, who have then turned their resentment to political uses—it is no land of pleasance that the Jew finds in this new Zion. It affords the acid test for the Jewish aspirant to nationality, the proof of his willingness to work at the task of making bricks without straw, the almost hopeless task of making a state out of reclaimed waste.

Naturally this is a task for young men. The old religious pilgrim, who came to spend his last few years in a mist of worship and ecsasy, blind to the squalor around him, comes scarcely any more. It is the young, who mean to live there, who come now ready to revitalize with their strength that old, tired land.

For fifty years the Zionist organization has been sending colonists into Palestine. First went the Hebraists, who believed devoutly in the possibility of reviving the ancient glories of the Ark and the Covenant; then, fifteen years later, went the Romanticists, who followed the current of the Jewish back-to-the-land movement to Palestine, believing that the Jew could sink his memories of ghettos and expulsions in a simple idyllic return to the homeland. But these now are represented by colonists of a different sort since the Balfour declarantion. These are the Jews who, rebelling at the intolerable political strictures of eastern Europe, have come to desire a national existence above everything. They are the political-minded ones who look to a realistic as well as theoretic Zion. In this new conception the old religious significance of Zion has been wiped out. Every shade of religious belief, and freedom from belief, is represented in these new colonists. They come, like most of the refugees to-day, from the heavily trodden borders of Austria and Poland and Rumania, but they are colonists of a different stamp—they come from the professional class or the cultivated middle class—emigrants from choice, not necessity.

Knowing that only the hardest manual labor and the most meager conditions of life await them in Palestine they have made an aristocracy of their reversed conditions. The 10,000 who have come to Palestine since the war have organized themselves in an association called the Pioneers. Nearly all fitted themselves for an agricultural life. This is the kind of life Zionism hopes ultimately to afford all who come to Palestine. But in the urgent present, while no land is available, the Pioneers have organized themselves in units to build roads and perform many other urgent public services of sanitation and improvement in Palestine.

The British government has accepted their services, and pays them the army wage for the work. The Zionist association adds something to this, and thus they are enabled to carry their families with them, living in tents in a kind of gypsy encampments along the line of construction. With this volunteer labor several valuable roads have been built through the interior of Palestine, and from the interior to the sea. Hard macadam roads from Haifa to Jerusalem, from Tiberius to Haifa, and from Jaffa to Jerusalem were built in this way.

Dr. Sokolow sketched vividly the difference between the old Palestine and the new, and though it was not Biblical Palestine that he sketched for background, it might have been to all intents and purposes.

There was then no railroad communication between Egypt and Palestine. He traveled by an ancient sea route in an equally ancient type of Levantine brig from Port Said to Jaffa. The journey took twelve days. Now a railway, equipped with the most modern European cars, makes the journey from Port Said to Kantara, in Palestine, in fourteen hours. Long caravans of camels, carrying their immemorial cargoes of dates and wine and oil, packed after an immemorial fashion, crawled imperceptibly over these roads making their endless journeys from the interior to the seaport. Now motor truck lines between Haifa and Damascus, between Tiberius and Haifa, between Jaffa and Jerusalem, carry crated shipments of grapefruit and melons and grapes, on swift journeys to the sea.

There was then in Jerusalem not a single automobile. Now the city swarms with them. There was not a single moving picture theater, now there are a dozen.

The common denominator of life in Zion is the moving picture. The only point at which Moslem, Christian and Jew unite to forget their racial and religious differences is in a common enthusiasm for the films.

Assimilation in the American sense is impossible there. Without a common public school system, without a really adequate system of communication between cities, the religious differences seem ineradicable.

Schools are privately supported though publicly supervised. Since the British occupation many Arab schools teach English. Jewish schools all teach English and sometimes teach Arabian, which is also a Semitic language, and to Hebrew what German is to English. The religious and racial differences will take a long time to bridge, but good and neighborly relations have been demonstrated as possible in the immediate present.

The presence of only 80,000 Jews in the land of their historic claim is proof of the difficult conditions with which they have to contend. The political hostility of the Arabs, the slowness with which reclamation of land can proceed, the difficult conditions of employment all combine to make the promise of Zionism slow of fulfillment. The bitter disillusioning truth about the Zionist hope is that it can never hope to be a refuge for all the millions of fugitive Jews in Europe. Palestine in its time of greatest glory gave a home to 4,500,000 people. Now, after thousands of years of misrule, it supports about 700,000. Unemployment in Palestine is as general as elsewhere at this time. The housing conditions are a good deal worse.

The truth is that Zionism now is a seed, a promise, a hope. The British have greatly limited the Zionist propaganda for immigration. The refugee Jew, turning his eyes from the closed gates of the United States, sees the same restrictive bars on Palestine. Until he is assured of employment the British do not permit him to enter there.

There is work to be done, for four times as many as are now there, says Dr. Sokolow. There are wide-flung public schemes of expansion of transit systems, of electrification and of irrigation on foot that will open up great sources of energy to the land and give employment to many thousands. There are resources of nitrate and petrol in the vicinity of the Dead Sea. There is desert country that can be made the most fruitful of any in the East, say the Zionists, if the money can be found to put these schemes under way.

It is not hard put to it to find labor. For all schemes of public improvement the Zionist state can conscript such communal service as that of the pioneers in building the roads.

For the Zionist state plans to profit by the evils it sees everywhere around it. It will, it hopes, have no industrial problem. The work of road building, the forty agricultural colonies it has founded, are all highly successful experiments in co-operation. The work of electrification and irrigation it plans to put through in the same way.

Co-operative Idea Carried Further Than Ever Before

But it offers an interesting prospectus for carrying the co-operative idea a little further than it has ever been carried before. Dr. Sokolow's mission in America is to raise part of $100,000,000 which Jewish sympathizers all over the world are asked to contribute as the wherewithal for these projects. A third of the money will be used for the sanitation and public improvement of the country. The other two-thirds will go to establish a bank in Jerusalem, which will capitalize the individual business enterprises, the building of homes, the improvement of land and the exploitation of national resources. The money will be loaned out at a nominal rate of interest and will return a nominal interest to the donors. If the promoter and capitalist, working thus in competition with a co-operating national bank, can find any profit in their business in Zion, then they are welcome to come.

For pledge on the money the Zionist organization holds out the promise that Palestine may be made to yield many times in corn and oil and wine what it does now under the primitive Arabian methods of cultivation. The modern agricultural stations maintained by the Zionist bureaus have demonstrated that many crops not indigenous to the land can be grown there. They assert that with the amazing variety of climate that exists in that small strip of country any kind of crop may be made to grow there. If it will not grow in one place it will grow in another.

The methods of the Jewish agriculturists and their utilization of modern machinery have already more than doubled the productivity of the land. The Arab land owners, observing these experiments, have profited by them and improved their own primitive methods of culture. But the Jewish immigration has had an unlooked-for result in the attitude of the fellahin, the peasants of the country, toward the land owners. With the offer of better wages, with the extension of their opportunities for employment, they have revolted against their former peonage.

Grudge of Land Owners Is Fostered by Intrigues

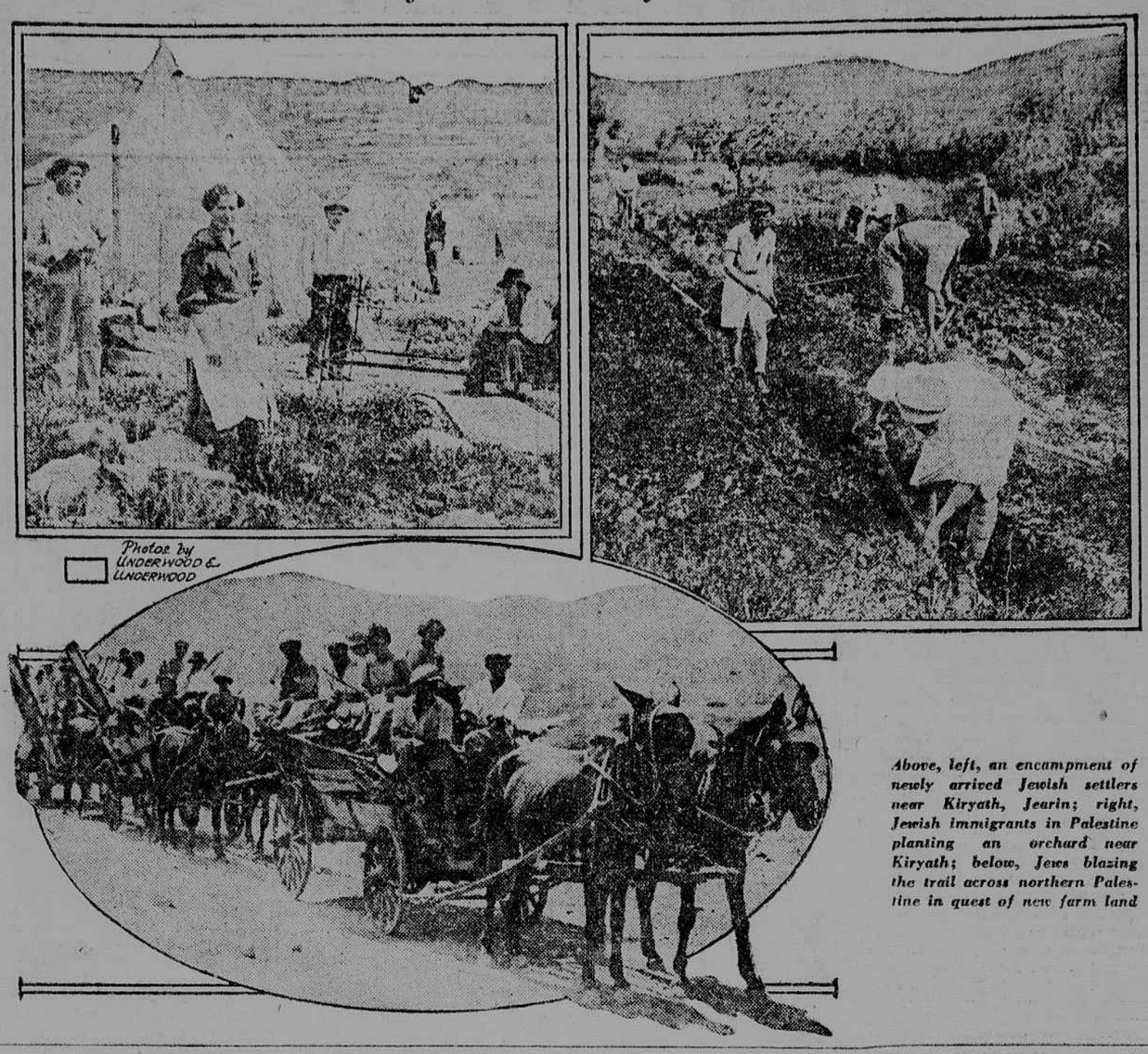
This is the real basis of the grievance of the Arab effendis, the land owners, against the Jews. This grudge, fostered by the political intrigues in French Syria, has grown to the proportions of which the pogroms last May are the significant indications.

It has been the less widely published part of Sokolow's mission to secure such guaranties of American friendliness that the handful of Zionist colonists will be heartened to go on. Academic as President Harding's assurances last week of friendliness may seem to us here, they have an extraordinary significance in Palestine. They will serve, Zionists feel certain, to stiffen the British hand of authority on recalcitrant natives and to stifle the instigations which proceed from French Syria.

Of the art which will proceed from this latest movement in the age-long quest of the Jew it is too soon to speak. In Palestine the Zionists have cast off the jargon. A dialect of Sephardic Hebrew, augmented with a modern vocabulary grammar and a syntax, is the language of Palestine By it a vigorous modern journalism is carried on. A theater is in contemplation.

Quite justifiably, the pioneer in Zion feels his enterprise more difficult than that of the American pioneer, whose problem was the comparatively simple one of material hardship. That is why he looks confidently this way for help.

Scenes of Zionist Activity in Palestine



Photos by UNDERWOOD & UNDERWOOD

Above, left, an encampment of newly arrived Jewish settlers near Kiryath, Jearin; right, Jewish immigrants in Palestine planting an orchard near Kiryath; below, Jews blazing the trail across northern Palestine in quest of new farm land

Young Men Take the Places Of Old Religious Pilgrims

Hardest Manual Labor and Most Meager Conditions of Life Await Colonizers; Nearly All Pioneers Fitted for Agricultural Life

America's Strategic Position in the Western Pacific Is Weak

By William L. McPherson

SECRETARY HUGHES'S naval limitation program aims at reducing the offensive capacity of the American, British and Japanese navies. Oceans separate the homelands of three chief sea powers. Peace among them is made more secure if none of them can maintain an overseas offensive against another.

The limitation put on capital ships would greatly lessen, and perhaps altogether remove, the danger of a naval descent on our Atlantic or Pacific coast, on Japan's coast or on Great Britain's. The United States gladly accepts the proposed restriction on offensive naval power because it has no wish to conduct an overseas naval offensive. It has never planned one or equipped itself for one. It has built a modern navy solely for defense—as a matter of national insurance.

5-5-3 Plan Is in Line With Non-Aggression Policy

The Hughes 5-5-3 ratio and the ten-year naval construction holiday are in line with our policy of non-aggression. We must remain on the defensive. In the Pacific, particularly, our strategic position constrains us to do so. The Hughes plans do not seek to interfere with the proper development of a British defensive or a Japanese defensive. Japan's strength in the western Pacific, considering ships, bases and lines of communication, is already superior to ours and will remain superior. It is rubbing it in, therefore, for Japan to raise the question of defensive land fortifications of our Pacific islands and to ask us to forego the development of Guam as a defensive base in return for an acquiescence in the perfectly equitable 5-5-3 fleet ratio.

Many Americans undoubtedly still think that a Pacific coast line constitutes our western boundary. The Japanese would like to have our government think so. They were taken aback when we annexed Hawaii in 1898. They became uneasy when we acquired Guam and the Philippines in 1899. Possession of Hawaii, Guam and the Philippines, as well as the Aleutian Islands, Midway Islands and Wake Island and a part of Samoa, has made us in the full sense a Pacific power. This expansion westward has brought advantages. It has also entailed liabilities. Instead of the Pacific coast line, comparatively easy to defend, we have now a western frontier which runs 3,300 miles southwest from Bering Sea to Guam and thence 1,500 miles west to the Philippine archipelago. Our first defensive line has been carried to the other side of the Pacific. Our second runs almost due south 2,037 miles from the Aleutians to Hawaii and thence 2,310 miles to Tutuila in the Samoan group.

The United States has no intention of giving up its Pacific possessions. Hawaii is a territory on the same level with Alaska. Talk about turning the Philippines adrift ended with the Wilson Administration. The findings of the Wood-Forbes commission have been accepted by the Administration as American policy. There is little chance of a change in the status of the islands for many years to come. But if we are to retain the Philippines in our domain it is our duty to defend them. And the best way to defend them and to secure our communications with them is to develop a naval base at Guam.

Americans generally do not realize the present vulnerability of our Pacific frontier should Japan, by any possibility, decide to attack it. As her navy stands now, and as it would stand under the 5-5-3 ratio, she could not very well harm us on this side of the Pacific. But the Philippines and Guam are close to her operating bases and she could bring to bear under existing conditions, or under the new ratio, much larger naval and military forces in that region than we could.

Hector C. Bywater, the English naval constructor and naval critic, has frankly set forth the weaknesses of our strategic position in the western Pacific. In his recent book, "Sea Power in the Pacific," he says, discussing the defenseless condition of the Philippines:

"Of the three naval bases on the Phillipines—Cavité, Olongapo and Polloc—none is properly equipped for the repair and maintenance of ships. Cavité is to be 'developed moderately'—according to the naval secretary's report for 1920—while the other two stations are ultimately to be abandoned. It will be seen, therefore, that nowhere in the archipelago does there exist a base capable of supplying the base needs of a great fleet; nor up to the end of 1920 were there any facilities for the storage of coal, oil, provisions or ammunition in the vast quantities required by a modern fleet. If the Pacific fleet visited the Philippines it would have to bring with it everything it needed in the way of fuel and stores, and once there it must rely on its own repair ships to make good any damage or defects. There are no defenses worth the name at Cavité. The old batteries erected by the Spaniards have not been reconstructed on modern principles and except for a few quick-firing guns the station could offer no resistance to a hostile squadron."

Philippines at Disposal Of Japan, Says U. S.

Mr. Bywater quotes the following passage from a letter written to him by "a distinguished American naval officer": "The Philippines are there for Japan whenever she likes to take them, and nothing can prevent her from seizing them when she feels disposed to do so. As at present circumstanced, we could do nothing whatever to protect them in time of war."

The British naval critic concurs in this view. He says: "It is certain, at any rate, that the invasion of the Philippines would present no serious difficulty to Japan. Her southernmost naval bases are less than 1,300 to 1,750 miles distant from the islands. Excellent landing places abound both in Luzon and in Mindanao; the shore defences are either insignificant or non-existent, and the small garrison of trained troops could offer only the feeblest resistance to a landing undertaken simultaneously at different points."

This conclusion ignores, of course, the possibilities of airplane defense against hostile warships and transports. But so far no adequate air force has been developed in the Philippines. The only alternative defense is one by naval force. Mr. Bywater says: "The Philippines must therefore be guarded by naval force or not at all. And, as the lack of a well-found fleet base near at hand puts effective naval protection out of the question for the time being, the islands would doubtless fall an easy prey to Japan in case of war with the United States. Those who endeavor to investigate the strategical problems to which a conflict would give rise must experience a feeling of amazement at the failure of the United States to take the most elementary precautions against the loss of the Philippines."

Admiral Niblack figured out not long ago the consumption of coal and oil by a fleet of thirty battleships, twenty large cruisers, forty destroyers, twenty colliers and the repair ship Vestal making a leisurely voyage from Panama to Manila by way of Magdalena Bay, Honolulu, Midway and Guam. The coal capacity of the fleet was 249,000 tons and the total oil capacity 45,000 tons. But the coal consumption on the way out was 242,200 tons and the oil consumption 41,600 tons, leaving 6,800 tons of coal and 3,400 tons of oil as a surplus on arrival at Manila. In order to move away from Manila coal and oil would have to be brought there from Singapore or Australia, an almost prohibited venture in time of war.

If from the naval point of view the Philippines cannot well be defended in Philippine waters, is there another base from which they can be defended? Mr. Bywater holds that there is. He says:

"But for one factor the fate of the Philippines, in the event of an American-Japanese conflict, would be a foregone conclusion. That factor is Guam—a position which has been rightly described as unique, commanding and of supreme importance, the veritable key of the Pacific. According to a plan submitted in 1905, Guam could have been made virtually impregnable for an outlay of $7,500,000, which included the erection of shore batteries and the laying of mine fields and other obstructions. Nevertheless, no steps have been taken to carry out such work, and the island remains to date a mere coaling station, without any adequate defenses and with no facilities for the upkeep of a naval squadron. To say that Guam bears to the Philippines the same relation that Helgoland bore to the German Bight or that Malta bears to the defense of British interests in the Mediterranean would be to understate rather than exaggerate the facts of the case. By properly fortifying and developing this island as a naval station of the first rank the American people would do much to relieve themselves of anxiety as to their future in the western Pacific; for no power would venture to molest the Philippines while a strong American 'fleet in being' was based at Guam, only 1,500 miles away. On the other hand, lacking fortifications, docks, magazines and the other appurtenances of a great naval base, the island would not only be useless as a *point d'appui*, but must fall into the enemy's hands. The fate of the Philippines is thus indissolubly connected with that of Guam. We may, indeed, go further and say that the issue of an American-Japanese war would primarily be decided by the fate of Guam."

It is obvious from these candid remarks that Mr. Bywater feels that the United States has committed a gross military blunder in not developing and fortifying Apra Harbor. We hold the key to the defense of our Pacific frontier and are letting it slip out of our hands. It is equally obvious why Japan is eager to impose a limitation on the fortification of Guam and the Philippines—the real objective of this maneuver being to hold Guam down to its present status of an unprotected coaling station.

The Allied Supreme Council assigned to Japan, under a mandate, the Caroline Islands, the Pelew Islands, the Marianne Islands (Guam excepted) and the Marshall Islands. This award was made in compliance with war agreements among the other principal powers prior to our entry into the war. Guam has thus been surrounded by a cordon of possible Japanese naval bases. The Marshall group lies to the southeast of it, the Caroline group to the south and the Pelew group to the southwest.

Japan has no right as a mandatory to fortify any of these islands. According to the sixth paragraph of Article 22 of the League of Nations covenant, they are to be administered as integral portions of Japan's territory, but subject to certain safeguards enumerated in the preceding fifth paragraph. These include "prevention of the establishment of fortifications or military or naval bases and of training of the natives for other than police purposes and defense of territory." Mr. Bywater treats these restrictions lightly, though he acknowledges their existence. He says: "That she (Japan) would forego the use of such invaluable bases in case of emergency is not to be believed."

The United States controls the eastern half of the Pacific. Its domain extends into the western half to within a few hundred miles of the China coast. Yet there is a strong body of opinion in Japan which still thinks of the United States only as a trans-Pacific power and looks forward to the time when the Philippines will be abandoned, Guam and Hawaii alienated or neutralized and our Western frontier again be made identical with the Pacific coast.

Professor Yoshi S. Kuno, of the University of California, is a liberal, so far as concerns Japanese domestic politics, and a frank critic of Japan's recent policies in Corea and China. But in his recent book, "What Japan Wants," he exploits the idea that the fortification of any of our Pacific islands is in itself a threat to Japan, even though we have never protested against Japan fortifying her own islands. He goes so far as to say: "With the exception of a few militarists the people of Japan are united in wanting all nations to remove all fortifications from their insular possessions on the Pacific, so that this ocean may become in reality what it is already in name, a truly 'peaceful sea.'"

"All nations," in this sentence must mean "all nations except Japan," for nobody has ever heard of a proposal on Japan's part to demolish her own home fortifications.

The Japanese idea was deftly conveyed the other day by Mr. Masonari Ito, correspondent in Washington of the Tokio "Jiji Shimpo." In a dispatch published in "The Evening Post" of December 5 he wrote:

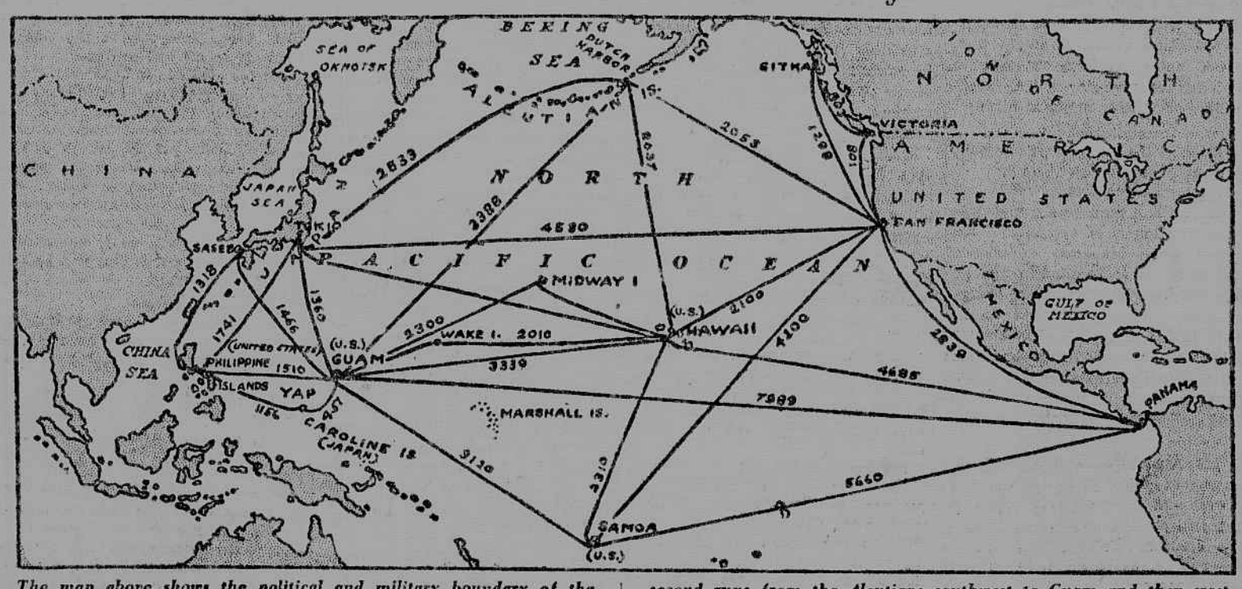
"As it is conducive for the maintenance of peace not to erect the far advanced naval bases, it is theoretically proper that the equipment in Guam and the Philippines should be abolished. If it is practicable, reduction and restriction may rightly be considered; in other words, docks, piers, repairing works, mooring places, water works and breakwaters should not be further extended. The fixed equipment should thus be restricted to the present scale at least, but at the same time any storage of ammunition or other war like supplies must be removed for the sake of effective realization of the Pacific peace, thus eliminating offensive measures and a war menace."

Were conditions at all equal in the western Pacific a cessation of fortification on both sides would not be unreasonable. But conditions are strikingly unequal. The United States cannot undertake a naval offensive against Japan. The odds would be too strong against it. On the other hand, Japan, under the present ratio or under the new ratio, could assume the offensive, if she cared to do so, with every chance of success.

The American attitude must continue to be purely defensive. There is all the more reason, consequently, for strengthening our defensive position and for developing the possibilities of Guam. It was a disastrous oversight at Paris which allowed the former German-owned islands in the Pacific north of the equator to pass to Japan, even under a mandate. That blunder still further weakened our position. To agree to leave Guam undefended and unutilized would be to repeat the Wilson blunders at Paris.

Our political control of the Philippines commits us merely to their protection. If protecting them on their own coasts and in their own waters is too great a task for our navy, as most naval strategists think it is, we can at least give them the long distance protection that would come from making the most, in a defensive way only, of the admirable naval base at Guam. Such a program is not in any sense inimical to Japan, or to the purposes of the Hughes plan for the limitation of offensive naval armament. Scrapping of capital ships and a naval building holiday leave the participants in the Washington conference perfectly free to pursue a policy of legitimate self-defense.

The American Frontier in the Pacific



The map above shows the political and military boundary of the United States within Pacific waters. In the military sense there are two lines to be defended—an outer and an inner. The inner runs almost north and south from a point in the Aleutian Islands, suitable for a naval base, to Hawaii and thence to Tutuila, Samoa. The second runs from the Aleutians southwest to Guam and then west to the Philippines. Between Hawaii and Guam are the Wake and Midway Island coaling stations. Guam is nearly surrounded by the former German islands assigned under mandate to Japan. Guam is considered the key to the western Pacific